

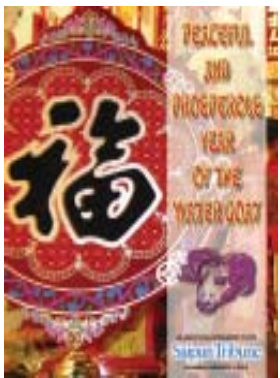
Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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The Saipan Tribune joins our brothers and sisters from the East in welcoming the Lunar New Year of the Water Goat. Today's issue comes with a special pullout supplement that contains comprehensive information on what feng shui experts have to say about the Year of the Goat. Will it bring peace and harmony? Progress or conflicts?

INSIDE



Jobless Rate

A drain on retail and restaurant jobs that hit women particularly hard pushed Japan's unemployment rate in December back up to a record 5.5 percent for the third time in a year.

Page 9



Afghan Crash

Four U.S. soldiers were killed when their Black Hawk helicopter crashed during a training mission in eastern Afghanistan on Thursday, U.S. officials said. The cause was being investigated.

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Atalig reviewing options in BoS issue

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Commerce Secretary and Banking Director Fermin Atalig is still considering several options regarding his next legal move, following the court's decision directing him to renew the license of the Bank of Saipan.

Assistant Attorney General Benjamin Sachs, on behalf of Atalig, disclosed yesterday that among Atalig's options is to file an appeal with the Supreme Court regarding the lower court's decision.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Edward Manibusan released Thursday afternoon his order on the issue of licensure, ruling against Atalig by

directing him to grant bank receiver Antonio Muna's application to renew the license of the bank.

In his order, Manibusan said the non-renewal of the bank's license would result in the liquidation of the bank and its assets, which would be devastating at this point when there is no clear plan yet for such a move. The court is currently

considering whether or not to approve the proposed rehabilitation plan for the bank.

"Obviously, my client is disappointed with Judge Manibusan, but we have great respect for [the] judge," Sachs said over the telephone yesterday. "The director of banking is considering his options."

Besides the possibility of filing an

See ATALIG on page 4

NMI economy under threat

Heinz wary of 2-pronged blow to Commonwealth's economy

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER



EDITH G. ALEJANDRO

MAKING IT SAFE FOR KIDS

DPS-Traffic Section officers check the car seats installed in vehicles during the second day of inspection procedures held at the Garapan Fire Station Friday, Jan. 31, 2003. This is in line with Gov. Juan N. Babauta's scheduled endorsement of Feb. 9-15 as Child Passenger Safety Week.



House Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider yesterday warned of two major blows threatening to hit the Commonwealth's frail economy: Guam's full-scale comeback into the tourism industry following its recovery from supertyphoon Pongsona and the looming war in the Middle East.

If decisive steps are not taken, Hofschneider projected that the two scenarios could dampen a local government that's already drenched in a \$14-million deficit, coupled with the \$6.69 million revenue shortfall recorded in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2003.

Guam, heavily battered by Pongsona in December, is reportedly anticipated to achieve near-normal tourism and business operations by next month, according to

See NMI on page 4



Hofschneider

Sufficient water in schools urged

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Board of Education Chairman Herman Guerrero has asked the Public School System to ensure that all schools have sufficient drinking water.

"Make sure that you attend to this because some think that we're not providing drinking water to students, which is not true. I don't want to hear any more complaints," Guerrero told

PSS officials during a special board meeting Wednesday.

This follows complaints from some lawmakers about the alleged lack of drinking water in certain schools. "They [legislators] are saying we were not providing water. That's not true," he said.

PSS commissioner Rita H. Inos said all schools are provided



Inos

with drinking water. Sometimes, not every room has the five-gallon container but this does not mean that there is no water available in the school, Inos said.

"Just address the water issue. Be creative with your budgeting," said Guerrero.

PSS Finance director
See SUFFICIENT on page 4

Iraq invites inspectors back

By HAMZA HENDAWI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Facing a possible U.S.-led attack, Iraq asked the chief U.N. weapons inspectors to return to Baghdad for a fresh round of talks amid diminishing prospects for a diplomatic solution.

A senior adviser to President Saddam Hussein wrote to Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei, inviting them to return to Baghdad in advance of a key U.N. Security Council session on Feb. 14.

The adviser, Amer Al-Saadi, suggested the talks could focus

See IRAQ on page 4



Local



NMC DIALOGUE

NMC president Kenneth Wright, center, explains to students and NMC staff the funding crisis facing the CNMI Scholarship Program. Wright assured them that no student has been deregistered due to lack of scholarship funding.

LIBERTY DONES

‘For drinkers desperate for a fix, there’s always a way’

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

The government hiked sin taxes partly to alter public behavior in the consumption of alcohol and tobacco products. But, as it turns out, some alcohol drinkers have reportedly found a way around paying the additional burden imposed on alcoholic beverages.

House Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider said he recently learned that some consumers end up getting access to alcoholic beverages that were bought from the Army and Air Force Exchange Service—an exclusive supermarket for military personnel and their families.

The commissary reportedly sells beer for \$14.50 a case, in contrast to the \$22 per case sold at regular stores. Members are allowed to purchase six cases a day, several of which reportedly wind up in the hands of non-members.

The Speaker said he has requested House Commerce Committee Chairman Andrew S. Salas to meet with the AAFES in Guam to discuss the possibility of revisiting this alcohol quota allowed to commissary patrons.

“It’s impractical for one to honestly accept that a daily quota of six cases of beer per day is realistically intended for personal consumption. I mean, you’d kill a person if you’re going to drink six cases everyday. And this is just being practical. I know that the commissary here is intended to serve the Armed Forces and their families. But in a small economy like ours, it really is making an impact when the practicality of the quota is unreal,” said Hofschneider.

The Speaker stressed that the Legislature cannot impose any taxes on the Armed Forces, but touted the need to work with the AAFES in addressing the issue.

“Without restricting or

depriving the Armed Forces and their families of the goods being offered at AAFES, we would like to work with them. But if in the end, they don’t seem to move to do anything, then that’s fine. Because we cannot tell them what to do,” said Hofschneider.

Asked if he would support a proposal to reduce the sin taxes by 50 percent, the Speaker said he would—on one condition. “[I will support it] provided we resolve a loophole in this issue, which is the tendency for people to find an alternative in their consumption of alcohol and tobacco.”

“Having heard the hotel association, the Duty Free and others that have been dramatically impacted, I think that we will still be able to accomplish the health concern of the legislation by reverting to the 50 percent reduction in the current structure,” said Hofschneider.

MPLA board renews clamor against abolition proposals

BY LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Marianas Public Lands Authority board vice chairman Manuel Villagomez is supporting Rep. Arnold Palacios’ recent opinion that the proposed transfer or abolition of the agency could be disadvantageous.

“It’s consistent with our position that the MPLA is better off as an independent agency. I support and agree with Rep. Palacios,” Villagomez said.

Palacios, who chairs the House Committee on Natural Resources, has emphasized that getting rid of the MPLA board may not be beneficial.

This, even as the lawmaker said that his committee will look at all angles in deciding the fate of House Bill 13-225, which seeks to abolish the MPLA and place its functions under an executive office.

The committee is set to conduct a series of public hearings on the bill, which was filed by Rep. Gloria DLC. Cabrera.

Last week, the MPLA board also submitted a position paper to Gov. Juan N. Babauta expressing its objection to a proposed executive order, which provides for the transfer of the MPLA to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

The position paper—signed by MPLA Board chairperson Ana Demapan-Castro, vice chair Villagomez, secretary Pedro Igitol, and member Pedro M. Atalig—asked Babauta to “leave MPLA as an independent public

corporation, so that, with your support, MPLA may safeguard the interests of our indigenous people.”

The board said the MPLA has a Constitutional and statutory mandate and function to manage and dispose of public lands.

“In the past, we’ve tried placing the awesome responsibility to manage and dispose of the public lands under DLNR. Needless to say, it was a disaster. The 12th CNMI Legislature recognized the need to leave the public land policies to an independent board and eventually created MPLA,” the board said.

Giving that function to a department, the board said, would create inherent conflict. “The Secretary owes a duty of

care to the general public while, on the other hand, the Secretary owes a duty of care to the indigenous people.”

The board also claimed that the DLNR is more susceptible to the “political whim of outside forces.” It added that the MPLA, through the strong leadership of its new commissioner, has done many great things.

The board pointed out that the MPLA has resolved many land exchanges and published land compensation regulations in order to administer the administration’s cash compensation program.

It warned that any attempt of transferring the MPLA would impede the Babauta administration’s land compensation program.

Car crash victim dies

After 12 hours at the Intensive Care Unit of the Commonwealth Health Center, 51-year-old Vicente M. Cabrera died of fatal injuries he sustained from a car crash Wednesday morning near the Saipan International Airport.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lt. Pete Muna said responding police officers and medics discovered Cabrera’s body sprawled along the road where his vehicle had slammed into the airport fence line.

Police report said the car crashed near the Hawaiian Rock Quarry when Cabrera,

who was driving southeast, ran off the roadway around 5:39am.

Cabrera sustained minor scratches to the right knee and foot. Officers found him lying next to the driver’s door outside his vehicle. The victim was driving a 1996 Toyota Camry that also sustained minor scratches to the right side and rear right corner.

From Dandan, Cabrera was transported to the Commonwealth Health Center and was immediately admitted to the ICU. He was later pronounced dead at 6:27pm. (Edith G. Alejandro)

daiichi chinese new year
+p213cvc

MPLA relocates Babauta's land

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The Marianas Public Lands Authority Board of Directors approved Thursday to relocate some 2.8-hectare property belonging to Gov. Juan N. Babauta and his wife Diana S. Chong.

This came following the failure of the Babautas to get access to their acquired property for lack of a public road.

"It's landlocked. There's no public access to their property," said MPLA commissioner Henry S. Hofschneider.

The lot, located in As Teo, was acquired from a friend who was awarded the land by the Marianas Public Lands Corp.

"Mr. Babauta bought a piece of property in As Teo from a landowner who received that piece of property pursuant to the Homestead Waiver Act," said Hofschneider.

The first landowner used to gain entry into the land through a private property that is now closed to the public. "The landowner had already developed the lot and closed the access road. Nobody is allowed to go through it," said Hofschneider.

He said it was an oversight on MPLC's part, which should have guaranteed public access to all homestead sites.

"MPLC deeded the property to the original owner but failed to provide public access. At that time, access was not a problem, but not anymore," said the MPLA official.

He said the Babautas have long wanted to develop the land but they could not get access to the property.

Hofschneider said the Babautas would be given the same size of property in Marpi.

During Thursday's meeting, the board also approved the

relocation of properties of two other landowners, Jose T. Sablan and Ignacio Demapan.

In the case of other landowners, he said his office would ask the board to either approve more relocations or ask the Department of Public Works to acquire private lands to provide access to those lots.

He said the government is mandated to provide access road to properties. "When it gives out land, roads have to be there. It's a statutory responsibility," he said.

Meantime, the Governor's property in As Teo would now belong to the MPLA. The MPLA aims to buy a nearby private land to be able to access the property.

According to the MPLA, this would take a considerable time. "The issue here is timing. We have to sit down with the landowner for compensation. It takes time for DPW to identify

the landowner and prepare for everything," said Hofschneider.

The MPLA said relocation benefits both the landowner

and the CNMI. "The landowner now has a property somewhere that he can easily access, so he could start using it. It benefits

the CNMI because we'll have the land back," he said.

NMC, Rota eyes partnership

The Northern Marianas College and the Rota municipality are eyeing a potential partnership for the creation of a recreational language institute on the island.

"An exciting project is coming into view," said Rota Major Benjamin T. Manglona. "The NMC looks to expand its student enrollment and revenue base."

Manglona said the proposed project has good potentials at attracting foreign students, specifically those coming from countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

"The NMC president envisions Rota, and particularly the former Pau Pau Hotel property as ideal for a Corporate Recreational Language Institute," the mayor said.

NMC president Dr. Kenneth E. Wright has reportedly prepared a draft proposal for the creation of the Rota

Corporate Language Institute.

"Course offerings would combine instruction in English with sports recreation, and cultural pre-

and enthusiasm of Mayor Manglona and the entire Rota Legislative Delegation."

"When I came to the CNMI, I was immediately made aware of the importance of the Governor's support for building NMC's capacity to serve international students. The mayor's initiative is an important first step in building such a program into the college's future for all three islands."

The Rota leadership, composed of the mayor, the legislative delegation, and the college administrator, through a recent resolution has requested the Board of Public Lands to designate the former Pau Pau property for municipal administration.

In conjunction with the college, the municipality is envisioned to operate the Corporate Recreational Language Institute.



Wright



Manglona

paration for life in Western society," said Manglona.

He added that Rota would support these non-academic elements of the curriculum. "The Northern Marianas College and the Municipality of Rota would form a partnership to operate the Corporate Language Education Center."

Meanwhile, Wright said he is "encouraged by the support

'Finders keepers' scheme prompts theft complaint

A 31-year-old man filed a theft complaint against an unidentified male suspect Thursday who allegedly stole his kite in Micro Beach, after the kite tumbled into the open sea.

Complainant Frank C. Cepeda told investigators that at 3:30 Thursday afternoon, he was kite surfing with a friend, Dan Lamar, at the Micro Beach when he lost his grip on the handle bar due to the heavy wind, causing him to fall into the water. When he stood up, he said the kite flying further west into the open sea.

Cepeda said he and Lamar went to the Smiling Cove to get a boat to search for his kite. While searching for the kite, the two were flagged down by a

male individual along the beach side area of the Dai-Ichi Hotel Saipan Beach.

"He told me that the kite was brought to shore by another man and that he know the guy," Cepeda said in his statement. He added that the witness also said that the guy who took the kite would not return it unless he is given a reward.

Cepeda then told the witness that he would return the boat to the Smiling Cove and would meet up with the guy. However, when he returned to the beach side, the man was no longer there.

The victim told police that the only reason he filed the complaint is because the kite

does not belong to the person who took it, and that he would only return it for a reward. (*Edith G. Alejandro*)



DIALOGUE WITH DEPOSITORS

EDITH G. ALEJANDRO

Bank of Saipan receiver Antonio S. Muna, standing, holds a dialogue with BoS depositors, including Sen. Pete Reyes, seated second left, during a recent meeting organized by the Save our Savings group Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2003, at the Multi-Purpose Hall.

Customer service workshop set

Customer service is everyone’s business, and on Tuesday, Feb. 4, a free customer service workshop will be held at the Northern Marianas College’s Small Business Development Center to share effective strategies and tactics that have been proven successful for other firms.

The workshop presenters are Rik and Janel Villegas, who have written numerous articles, taught courses, and practiced what you’ll learn in their own businesses. This is one in a series of free workshops

offered as part of a leadership training program sponsored by the Office of Insular Affairs.

The Leadership Excellence And Development, or LEAD, workshops are specifically designed for small business owners and directors or managers in the public and private sector.

A typical company loses 10 to 30 percent of their customers each year. According to a Bain and Company study, if you can retain just 5 percent more of your customers, it can boost

profits by as much as 100 percent over time.

It also costs 5-6 times more to win new customers than it does to keep current customers. Customers you retain are much more profitable than individuals who are just shopping.

The Customer Service workshop will share four stages of a customer interaction and provide methods for everyone to improve their relationships with the customer. Participants will also learn six steps to resolve a customer complaint.

As you improve your

customer interactions, your organization will develop loyal customers who return and share their positive experiences with others.

During the difficult economic conditions all business are facing today, business owners cannot afford to lose one customer because of poor customer service skills.

Registration is open to the entire CNMI business community for the Feb. 4 workshop. It will run from 6pm to 8:30pm. To register, contact Robert Suzuki at 235-1551.

NMI
From Page 1

the Speaker.

Destruction sustained by the neighboring island proved an advantage to Saipan, after tourists originally bound for Guam diverted to the Northern Marianas, rendering a significant increase in NMI tourist arrivals.

“I believe the anticipated recovery period for the tourism industry and businesses in Guam is just around the corner. That recovery would inevitably translate to a decline in the level of tourist arrivals and the level of business activity here since Pongsona,” said Hofschneider.

Further, the Speaker said the CNMI must also brace for the adverse impact should the U.S.-Iraq conflict snowballs into a war.

“These two issues are

beyond our control, and it is incumbent upon us to anticipate these things. The two issues are quite different in nature and circumstances but are of the same impact. [If war erupts] in the Middle East, there will be fear of traveling. I think everyone will be apprehensive in spending. So tourism arrivals would probably be impacted again,” said Hofschneider.

The Speaker hoped yesterday to meet with the Babauta administration to discuss possible courses of action. A meeting about the government’s fiscal affairs was supposed to take place between the Legislature and the administration at the House Chamber yesterday afternoon but the administration rescheduled it for next week.

Hofschneider, in an interview with reporters yesterday, said that steps must be taken to address the

government’s expenditure and revenue shortfalls.

However, he stressed that tinkering with more revenue-generating legislative measures must be approached with extreme caution.

“You can only do so much in reassessing or revisiting existing taxes or licenses and fees. When one talks about increasing a \$15-fee to \$25, that may be insignificant on its face value, but collectively the impact is nonetheless equal to the ability of the people to fork out this additional fee for licenses,” said the Speaker.

Citing basic macro-economics, Hofschneider conceded that the local economy would be better off if taxes were reduced and people were given back their spending money.

“Once you increase taxes and take money away from

individuals and businesses, there will be no reinvestment into the economy,” he explained.

But given the Commonwealth’s fiscal condition, the reality of imposing reduced taxes seems very far-fetched, he added. “So it’s a game of balance. And I believe that we cannot expect the Legislature by itself or the administration by itself to propose such an initiative and reducing the level of services that we have in order for us to stay within our resources.

“We need both entities to come on board and present it to the people. This is the best option that we can do to stay within our ability to raise revenues and pay for these services at whatever level that we’ve agreed, without the obvious, which is displacing people from their current employment,” said Hofschneider.

ATALIG
From Page 1

appeal in connection with the licensure issue, Sachs said the Commerce secretary could simply comply with the order and take no further steps. He could also comply but additionally ask the court for “some relief.”

Sachs said his client is more focused on is the rehabilitation plan, which could pave the way for the reopening of the beleaguered financial institution.

Sachs also pointed out that the Calvo shareholders have yet to return the money paid to them by Douglas Montgomery, amounting to some \$3.57 million, which excludes interests or profits.

Michael Dotts, lawyer for the Calvos—Paul, Edward and Thomas—said his clients are willing to return the money. “We filed a motion to return the money but he [Atalig] opposed,” Dotts said, adding that the motion seeks to have the money deposited in court.

Besides Atalig, former BoS receiver Randall Fennell also opposed the return of the money, according to Dotts.

A hearing on the request to approve the rehabilitation plan is scheduled on February 12.

SUFFICIENT
From Page 1

Richard Waldo said his office has always been creative, “but yes, we’ll handle this.”

IRAQ
From Page 1

on improving cooperation between the two sides and on “methods of disarmament verification,” the Foreign Ministry said Thursday.

Meanwhile, Cabinet ministers told reporters an advance five-month food ration had been handed out to Iraqi families as a precaution—evidence of growing suspicion among Iraqi officials that an attack has become inevitable.

Blix, in charge of the chemical, biological and missile inspection programs, and ElBaradei, head of the U.N. nuclear control agency, said they had not received the invitations and would not say whether they would accept.

The proposed visit would come four days ahead of the inspectors’ next report to the Security Council on whether Iraq has complied with a council resolution requiring it to allow inspectors to hunt for weapons of mass destruction.

On Monday, Blix told the

Waldo said the PSS allots \$12,000 every year for the drinking water use of big schools and \$4,000 for small schools. Small schools are those with 300-400 enrollees or not exceeding 700.

council that after two months of inspections he did not believe Iraq had “genuinely” accepted disarmament. Iraqi officials later pledged to make greater efforts to cooperate.

Blix and ElBaradei held two days of talks in Baghdad on Jan. 19-20 before they delivered the report.

Talk of war dominated top-level meetings in Washington on Thursday as the United States increased pressure on its allies to support efforts to disarm Saddam.

President Bush met with Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi, who endorses the hard line on Iraq. In an Oval Office session, Bush put allies on notice that he will not wait long to act, describing the window as “weeks, not months.”

But in a meeting with Secretary of State Colin Powell, Canadian Foreign Minister Bill Graham cautioned that a U.S. invasion of Iraq without U.N. endorsement would “risk consequences.”

The U.S. and British governments have threatened to take military action against

Currently, PSS maintains 21 schools—12 elementary schools with a total enrolment of students 4,705; and nine secondary schools registering a total of 4,705 students.

Saddam if he does not disarm. The Iraqis deny maintaining any chemical, biological or nuclear weapons programs.

The United States and Britain are rushing troops to the Gulf in the biggest U.S. military buildup in the region since the 1991 war to back up threats of military action if Iraq fails to cooperate.

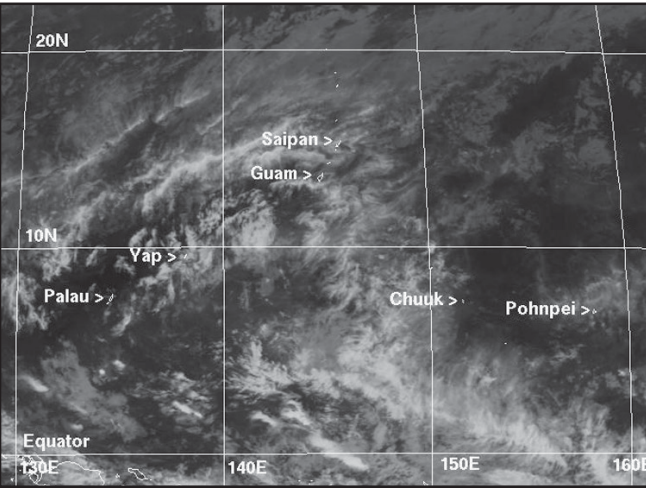
Also Thursday, two Iraqis suspected of links to banned weapons programs refused to be interviewed privately by U.N. inspectors. So far, no Iraqis have agreed to meet with inspectors without an Iraqi official present.

Bush has accused Saddam of threatening scientists with death if they agree to private interviews.

The United Nations has been pressing Iraq for private interviews in hopes the subjects would be more forthcoming with information. Iraq insists it is encouraging private interviews and no one has accepted.


Another unresolved issue raised by Blix is Iraq’s refusal to allow flights by U-2 spy planes in support of the inspections.

WEATHER FORECAST




PICTURE TIME: 1:00 A.M., JANUARY 31, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


A near-equatorial trough extends from the Equator at 135e to 3n142e to the equator at 160e. Convergence of trade winds into the trough is generating clouds and scattered showers between the Equator and 5n from 142e to 152e...and between the Equator and 2n from 152e to 176e. This includes southern portions of Yap...Chuuk and Pohnpei States. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers east of Yap or between 7n and 12n from 138e to 145e. A cold front/shear line enters the discussion area at 25n167e... continues southwest to 20n158e and extends to 9n130e. Low clouds and scattered showers are found up to 200 miles north of this boundary.




SAIPAN & TINIAN
Partly cloudy and breezy.
Winds: Northeast at 15-25 mph.
Temperature: High nears 86. Lows near 75.




GUAM & ROTA
Partly cloudy and breezy.
Winds: Northeast at 15-25 mph.
Temperature: High nears 86. Lows near 75.




PALAU
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: Northeast at 20 kt.




YAP & ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




















KOSRAE
Partly cloudy.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.



CHUUK
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 20 kt.



MAJURO
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Partly Cloudy	68F (20C)	53F (12C)
 Beijing	Sunny	25F (-4C)	9F (13C)
 Hong Kong	Sunny	61F (16C)	53F (12C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80F (27C)	66F (19C)
 London, England	Cloudy	43F (6C)	32F (0C)
 Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	51F (11C)
 Manila	Partly Cloudy	85F (29C)	70F (21C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	80F (27C)	60F (16C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	75F (24C)	63F (17C)
 New York City	Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	36F (2C)	26F (-3C)
 Paris	Snow	40F (4C)	25F (-4C)
 Pusan	Partly Cloudy	33F (1C)	16F (-9C)
 Rome	Partly Cloudy	58F (14C)	39F (4C)
 Salem, Oregon	Cloudy	52F (11C)	38F (3C)
 San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)
 Seoul	Flurries	22F (-6C)	1F (-17C)
Tokyo	Sunny	50F (10C)	34F (1C)
Washington, DC	Shower	44F (7C)	28F (-2C)

Visitors with disabilities to arrive in May

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

At least 200 individuals with disabilities are scheduled to arrive on Saipan in May this year for a cultural exchange program with public schools on the island, Pacific Development Inc. said yesterday.

PDI program coordinator Gordon Marciano said that, after a brief visit by the Nara Ikusei Association in January 17, organization officials showed interest in holding a cultural exchange program with CNMI students.

Nara Ikusei Association is a nonprofit organization that deals mostly with people with disabilities and has more than 400 members from the Nara Prefecture of Japan.

During their previous visit, association officials met with the CNMI Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Marianas Visitors Authority, the StarPo, and the CHC Volunteers Association.

According to the program coordinator, MVA managing director Jonas Ogren extended

his invitation to the association, saying the agency would support and make special arrangements for the group in May 2003.

Marciano explained that the cultural exchange program with Nara Ikusei Association earned the support of the MVA and other related agencies to ensure the success of the program.

"The purpose of the visit was to do a site inspection and to meet with agencies that provide special needs. They had visited the OVR and discussed the program with Bruce Bailey, OVR case manager and

Rogelio Madriaga, administration and operation manager," said the PDI official.

He added that the organization was very pleased to note that there is a network of agencies in the Commonwealth that assist people with disabilities.

Also, the group noted that the agencies are focused toward integration, preparing persons with disabilities to enter the world of work and reach two goals: gainful employment and independent living.

"The Nara Ikusei Asso-

ciation is an independent advocacy agency that has the authority to set priorities and develop strategies to improve the life of the people it represents," Marciano said.

Besides acknowledging the assistance provided by the StarPo, the association was also impressed with the dedication of the CHC Volunteers Association for bringing awareness to the community.

"The group was impressed with the CHC Volunteers Association and recognizes their efforts in the community in providing equipment for all three

hospitals in the CNMI," Marciano said.

The association's visit to the CNMI was led by KNT representative Kaoru Morishita, disability school teacher Masayuki Kajita, and chair Akinobu Nakao.

Nakao and the organization were given the initiative to develop their itinerary for the trip, which is aimed to encourage members to make decisions and continue to become more independent. Nakao hopes that they will be able to meet other individuals who have disabilities in the May visit.



Boy Scouts Week proclaimed

Members of the CNMI Boy Scouts gathered at the Office of the Governor yesterday morning to witness the ceremony that officially designated February 2 to 8 as Boy Scouting Week.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta, flanked by Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Juan L. Babauta and CNMI Boy Scouts officials, inked his signature to the proclamation

Nine-year-old scout Dino Palacios reads the proclamation designating Feb. 2 to 8 as Boy Scouting Week.

MARIAN A. MARAYA

urging the CNMI community to support Boy Scouting activities and endeavors.

Boy Scouting in the CNMI started in 1949, coinciding with the 92nd anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.

"The organization's goals reflect the values of Chamorro and Carolinian culture," reads part of the proclamation.

Babauta acknowledged that the knowledge, skills, principles and values gained from the program by CNMI's young boys will truly help them "Be Prepared" as they become productive citizens of the

Commonwealth.

"A scout prepares for whatever comes his way by learning all he can. He works to pay his way and keeps himself strong, healthy and ready to meet the challenges of life," said the proclamation.

The Boy Scouts is touted as a vital organization for boys who are growing up, enabling them to develop self-esteem and leadership skills, and providing an atmosphere of warmth and true friendship.

The Boy Scouts of America was established in Feb. 8, 1910. (Marian Maraya)

Gov. meets with Tinian employees

By JOE C. CHARFAUROS
FOR THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In what appears to be a first for public sector employees on Tinian, Gov. Juan N. Babauta traveled to the island to make a presentation on the Commonwealth government's fiscal conditions.

The air at the Tinian multipurpose was filled with anxiety as government employees from the island wait for the Governor's arrival from Saipan, who came with his Special Assistant for Administration Thomas Tebuteb, Finance Secretary Frankie Villanueva, Planning and Budget Director Ed Tenorio, and the Governor's consultant Adam Turner.

Babauta's delegation was welcomed by Tinian government officials led by Mayor Francisco Borja.

During the presentation, Villanueva gave a brief account of the financial condition of the CNMI.

After the finance secretary's presentation, the Governor took

the stand to give a more detailed description of the government's financial conditions.

Babauta encouraged Tinian government employees to help the administration cut back on personnel expenses by volunteering to have their own

work hours reduced by 5 hours per pay period.

Although many employees did not immediately bite the government's plea for voluntary work hour reduction, they, nevertheless, said they understand

the situation.

One Tinian employee, David Evangelista, said that the 5-hour reduction per pay period is too much to ask for someone like him who gets only about \$15,000 a year.

Instead of giving up 5 hours per pay period, Evangelista suggested that he can donate \$20 every payday to the government, which the Governor appreciated and understood.

Other suggestions were floated during the meeting, and Babauta assured the employees that everything will be given serious consideration.



Babauta

golds gym
+yellow

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Time for a deadline

The United Nations risks irrelevance unless it promptly sets a date on which it will use military force against Iraq if that nation does not disarm.

Piling fact upon fact, photo upon photo Wednesday, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell methodically demonstrated why Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein remains dangerous to his own people, Iraq's neighbors and, potentially, the Western world. Powell reminded the U.N. that the responsibility is Hussein's alone for proving that he has destroyed the weapons of mass destruction his nation systematically acquired and that he has abandoned all efforts to develop more.

Hussein's chemical attacks on Iranian soldiers and Kurdish civilians showed that he will use any weapon, no matter how horrible. After Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War, U.N. inspectors learned that Hussein still had huge supplies of botulinum toxin, VX nerve agent, anthrax and other weapons materials. Powell also noted that Iraq had worked secretly but aggressively to build a nuclear bomb.

Iraq says its weapons fixation is behind it. But Powell used satellite photographs, taped intercepts of Iraqi soldiers' conversations and what he said was the testimony of defectors to persuasively suggest that Hussein still has weapons and the means to make more. Powell also offered solid evidence that Hussein has sophisticated ways to hide whatever he has from the 100 inspectors trying to scrutinize a country the size of California.

Although Powell did not directly link Baghdad to al-Qaida's Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington, he did spell out what he characterized as clear links between Iraq and al-Qaida.

President Bush, in his September speech to the U.N. General Assembly, warned that the United Nations had been blundering down the path of the League of Nations, which collapsed in the 1930s when it repeatedly failed to challenge nations' aggression. Bush's U.N. speech helped spur the Security Council to pass Resolution 1441, which demanded yet again that Hussein explain precisely what he has done with his weapons and weapons plants and that he give inspectors unfettered access to make sure he's not lying.

Since then, the U.S. has stationed tens of thousands of troops in the region, with the total expected to be 150,000 or more by the end of February. Bush is threatening to attack Iraq without the United Nations, backed only by the growing coalition of nations that have offered support. The U.N. can spare the world that undesirable option by showing a resolve that is long overdue.

The United Nations must give Hussein one final chance to avoid war—by complying or fleeing—and be ready to launch missiles, planes and troops if he again disregards or disrespects the world's clear disarmament demands.

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Even a tragedy can be overblown by media

The disintegration of a space shuttle is a big story. But it's not that big. We're all moved by the death of astronauts, just not that moved. It's a tragedy for sure. But. ...

Does it really warrant the preposterous questions we hear being asked?

Will President Bush have to rethink Iraq? Will he find it easier to bend Congress to his will for the sake of tax cuts? Are critics of the president once again unpatriotic? Has Bush displayed anew his remarkable leadership? Should humankind abandon the quest to explore our universe? Is everything different now? Blah, blah.

Well, perhaps not that last question—I'm exaggerating. But the others turn out not so preposterous because otherwise respectable and influential people asked them.

The phenomenon of the big-news story seems only to get bigger with each big story. Or if not bigger, then equally overdone.

"At one time, broadcasters seemed to reflect the newspaper editorial judgment and were the better for it. Now the newspapers and broadcasters reflect cable television news judgment and are the worse for it," said Van Gordon Sauter, the former president of CBS News whose distinguished career has also included newspapers.

"Seven men and women of unusual accomplishment and merit were lost Saturday. A national undertaking of considerable magnitude was called into question. But the inundation of coverage—fueled by rank speculation, mind-numbing techno talk and, at times, the most macabre of interests—seems decidedly overwrought. This is not a national calamity. It is a loss of good people, unexpectedly and inexplicably. It is a national purpose that needs to be re-examined in a serious manner. But the coverage reveals upscale newspapers and broadcasters associating quantity and compulsive urgency with quality and balance. Cable television rules."

For one thing, some in the media, if not many, went beyond hype and slipped the bounds of truthfulness in the immediate aftermath this time. Barry Glassner, author of "The Culture of Fear" and professor of sociology at University of Southern California, noted the broadcast teasers and newspaper headlines announcing "A Nation Mourns." "Those are probably inaccurate as well as being over the top," said Glassner, who like countless other Americans went about his business in the last few days saddened but not in mourning.

In my neighborhood last weekend, people washed their cars, mowed their lawns, checked their lottery numbers, stood in line at the movies, watched sports at the local sports bar, took the kids to the park for soccer, honored their dinner reservations, played volleyball at the beach, planned summer vacations. The styling salon

By JOHN BALZAR

Los Angeles Times

Balzar is a columnist for *The Times*

down the street was bustling, you could see a blanket of cars at the mall, and it was, a spokeswoman confirmed, "business as usual" at Disneyland.

"The first rule in medicine is to do no harm; the first rule of journalism is to be accurate," Glassner admonished.

Columbia's midair breakup was a shocking event, we were told. To those who were in the debris path, it no doubt was. Perhaps the same for those who take their emotional cues from TV announcers. But the remainder of us? Is it really shocking to learn that something as risky as entering the Earth's atmosphere from space at more than 12,000 mph results in a fatal accident?

From long experience, we know that humans and fast-moving machines are a dangerous mix. Extrapolating from annual statistics, we can estimate that about 115 people die each day in the United States from traffic accidents—events that are shocking to survivors and families of the victims but not beyond. What is really shocking are the grandiose generalizations, the repetitive hyperbole and the sheer echo-chamber volume and mass that accompany the periodic blow-up of big news accounts these days.

Linda Feldman, a health-care executive for the needy and a self-described "news junkie," peered in on TV for 10 minutes when she heard about the accident. "At that point I knew about all I had to know. And I still think I know as much as anybody really does. I keep looking for another channel. Too much of it strikes me as drivel ... shallow ... full of purple prose."

Does it matter if the news media—the bulletin boards of our society—periodically lose their heads? Of course it does. How can the fourth estate be a credible guidepost to events if it repeatedly exploits them, or appears to?

For the most part, I'm a knee-jerk defender of my profession. Surely there are plenty of knee-jerk critics who deserve to be met head-on. Except in occurrences like the loss of the Columbia, when a country needs perspective—and cannot count on us to provide it.

Know about your municipal council



By GREGORIO V. DELEON GUERRERO

(Part 13)

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-015: Relative to requesting Mr. Anthony T. Benavente, director of Park and Recreation, to make or cause to make periodic inspections of all basketball courts and sports facilities in the villages to ensure they are properly maintained.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-016: Relative to recognizing, memorializing and congratulating Tan Holdings Corporation for its contribution to the development and growth of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-017: Relative to recognizing, memorializing and congratulating Jet Holdings Co., Inc., for its contribution to the development and growth of the CNMI.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-018: Relative to recognizing, memorializing and congratulating Suwaso Corporation dba Coral Ocean Point Resort Club for its contribution in the development and growth of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-019: Relative to recognizing and congratulating lawyer David A. Wiseman upon his successful confirmation as CNMI Superior Court Association Judge.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-020: Relative to extending a sincere and heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of the Late Hon. Leon Taitingfong Camacho upon his untimely and sudden death on March 9, 2001 at the age of 72 years.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-021: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Micro Pacific Develop-ment Inc., dba Saipan Grand Hotel for its contribution to the development and growth of the CNMI.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-022: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Summer Holiday Hotel for its contribution to the development and growth of the CNMI.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-023: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Full House Inc., dba Micro Beach Hotel for its contribution to the development and growth of the CNMI.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-024: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Saipan Laulau Development Inc., dba Laulau Bay Golf Resort, Saipan, for its contribution to the development and growth of the CNMI.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-025: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Lucas Mendiola, Michael White, Elizabeth Torres-Untalan, Felix R. Fitial and Juan S. Tenorio for being the top five (5) individuals as having served the longest amount of time in government boards, commissions and council.

Res. No. 6SMC-5RS-026: Recognizing and congratulating Northern Marianas College Board of Regents Chairman Ramon G. Villagomez, Fermin M. Atalig (Interim chairman) and members of the Board—Joaquin “Jack” Sablan, president; employees and students of the Northern Marianas College on the NMC’s 20th Anniversary celebration from March to December 2001.

Res. No. 6SMC-6RS-002: Relative to recognizing and congratulating the Commonwealth Health Center Volunteers Association for its strong commitment and interest in assisting our people and patients at CHC.

Res. No. 6SMC-6RS-003: Relative to recognizing and congratulating the members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Inc., for their contribution to the development and growth of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Res. No. 6SMC-6RS-004: Relative to requesting the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Works and other agencies to expedite the construction and completion of a new public cemetery in Marpi.

Res. No. 6SMC-6RS-005: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Janet Han King of Tinian for being crowned the 2001 Miss CNMI Universe Queen on Saturday, March 31, 2001 at the Dai-Ichi Hotel’s Hibiscus Theatre Hall, Saipan.

Res. No. 6SMC-6RS-006: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Rowina Marie T. Ogo for being 1st Runner-up and Miss Congeniality for the 2001 Miss CNMI Universe on Saturday, March 31, 2001 at the Dai-Ichi Hotel’s Hibiscus Theatre Hall, Saipan.

Res. No. 6SMC-6RS-007: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Sierra Lei K. Cody for being named the 2001 Miss CNMI 2nd Runner-up and the Best National Costume on Saturday, March 31, 2001 at the Dai-Ichi Hotel’s Hibiscus Theatre Hall, Saipan.

Wright is Right!

In a remarkable display of wit and candor, marketing finesse and salesperson’s determination, Northern Marianas College president Dr. Kenneth Wright regaled the members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce with a presentation of his 10-year plan for NMC. Speaking before the regular membership meeting Wednesday noon at Pacific Islands Club’s Charley’s Cabaret, Dr. Wright mustered the eloquence of Shakespeare, the impact of researched verifiable data, and the aesthetics of a well-conceived and logically articulated business plan.

Not necessarily in the order of importance or the chronology of the presentation, Dr. Wright offered the following comments:

1. NMC offers only four major programs though it advertises that more.

2. NMC is deficient in performing the normal functions of a Community College, particularly as it relates to the training requirements of the employed adult population.

3. NMC’s accreditation process is still to accomplish reporting requirements for 1997 to 2000 but he knows how and is confident that the College, reaccredited in 2001, will make accreditation requirements current.

4. NMC’s infrastructure needs serious upgrading.

5. NMC’s current international students constitute more than 20 percent of the student population as compared to the average 4-plus percent population among Community Colleges in the U.S. continent.

6. Enrollment of international students in continental USA is down due to security and immigration issues, which may not apply or can be overcome in the CNMI.

7. Relative to ability to pay and compared to rates in the continent, resident students should pay 40 percent less and non-resident students should pay 90 percent more than they are currently paying.

The vision, the mission and the plan: transform NMC as a Pacific Gateway for international students, particularly neighboring Asian countries like China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Indonesia and Thailand, while it becomes a quality education institution for its own residents’ needs.

The plan is bold. Community Colleges traditionally serve locally employed adults needing additional or upgrade training. The plan not only zeroes in on local requirements but also invites high end managers from other countries to short-term courses on technical and language skills, along with those coming for Associate and Bachelor’s degrees. It would turn NMC into a community college with an international clientele.

It is innovative. It capitalizes on the CNMI’s year round pleasant climate.

It relies on the cultural diversity that is already in place. It



By JAIME R. VERGARA

inventories the capital assets already present like CIP funding and underutilized visitors industry housing facilities. Faculty requirements, in addition to the current complement of English instructors, are recruitable. But most significantly, it builds on an asset that the world demands—the English language.

The fact that English has become the language of trade, commerce and industry, the arts and humanities and the internet, makes NMC plan to integrate English as a Second Language into a student’s field of study attractive. This would be true of all two-year Associate degrees, leaving students pursuing a Bachelor’s level degree already proficient in English by the time they delve into their major focus.

“Who else do you need to convince?” asked one of the Chamber members. The plan is bankable. Investors put their money on less viable projects; \$10 million as a start-up capital is doable; facilities upgrade of \$34 million is reasonable on a 10-year possible net income of \$150; resources are identifiable and accessible.

To be sure, the cynical wags will retort with the convenient putdowns such as: “How can we create quality education when we have to pass everyone for cultural sensitivity; and hire on the basis of kinship rather than merit?”

Dr. Wright holds himself accountable to the task of creating quality education. As to the question of whether the resident working adults will enroll, he pointed to the business leaders that that is their job.

The plan and the planner comes in the fullness of time. Warnings on accreditation and compliance deficiency add stress, but the option of standing still is costly and self-defeating. The window of opportunity is short and decisive moves have to be initiated within the quarter. There is the quality of this being a life-or-stagnation decision for the College.

The Pacific Gateway vision may just be the paradigm shift needed to get us moving towards the future that is already here, leaving behind, or, at least, keeping at bay, some of the tiresome quarrels on our three industries—tourism, garment and federal—that seem to preoccupy otherwise responsible souls. Pacific Gateway weaves through all the industries in a way that has caught the imagination of many.

To echo a pre-school send-out ritual: These are the times! We are the people! Wright on, right on!

Where were the news media before the shuttle disaster?

By PAUL JANENSCH

The Hartford Courant

Question: Professor News, how well did the news media cover the Columbia space shuttle disaster?

Answer: All the news media—television, radio, newspapers, the newsmagazines and the Internet—did an outstanding job. But there were problems. The constant repetition of the same footage and information on TV exasperated viewers who stayed with the live coverage. Also, was enough attention devoted to concerns about shuttle safety raised before the disaster?

First, the bouquets. It was American news coverage at its best—fast, factual and complete. Idle speculation about the cause was held to a minimum. TV and radio were quick to report that the disaster did not seem to be the result of terrorism or other foul play.

Of course, live TV and radio coverage can be risky. CBS anchor Dan Rather, who seems to attract more than his share of weirdos, took a call from a man in Texas who said a piece of debris had landed on his property and then told Rather he was “an idiot.” Rather responded that maybe he was an idiot, “but that is beside the point.” The caller was cut off, and Rather apologized to the viewers.

The print media delivered the goods on the days following. On Sunday, newspapers provided in-depth coverage of the disaster and human-interest profiles of the seven astronauts, who were a melting pot in miniature.

The news weeklies, which were getting ready to go to press, ripped up their pages to make room for Columbia coverage.

The Internet showed it continues to mature as a major news medium. CNN.com told The Associated Press that its traffic on Saturday was nine times normal, yet it had no problem handling the hits.

Fortunately, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration was much more forthcoming about its investigation into what went wrong than it was after the Challenger exploded on Jan. 28, 1986.

Nothing is perfect, however. The footage of the Columbia breaking up was shown over and over on TV. Yes, the networks wanted to be sure that viewers tuning in for the first time saw it. But enough is enough.

Both CNN and the Fox News Channel made viewers dizzy by overdoing the split-screen gimmick and running a crawl along the bottom.

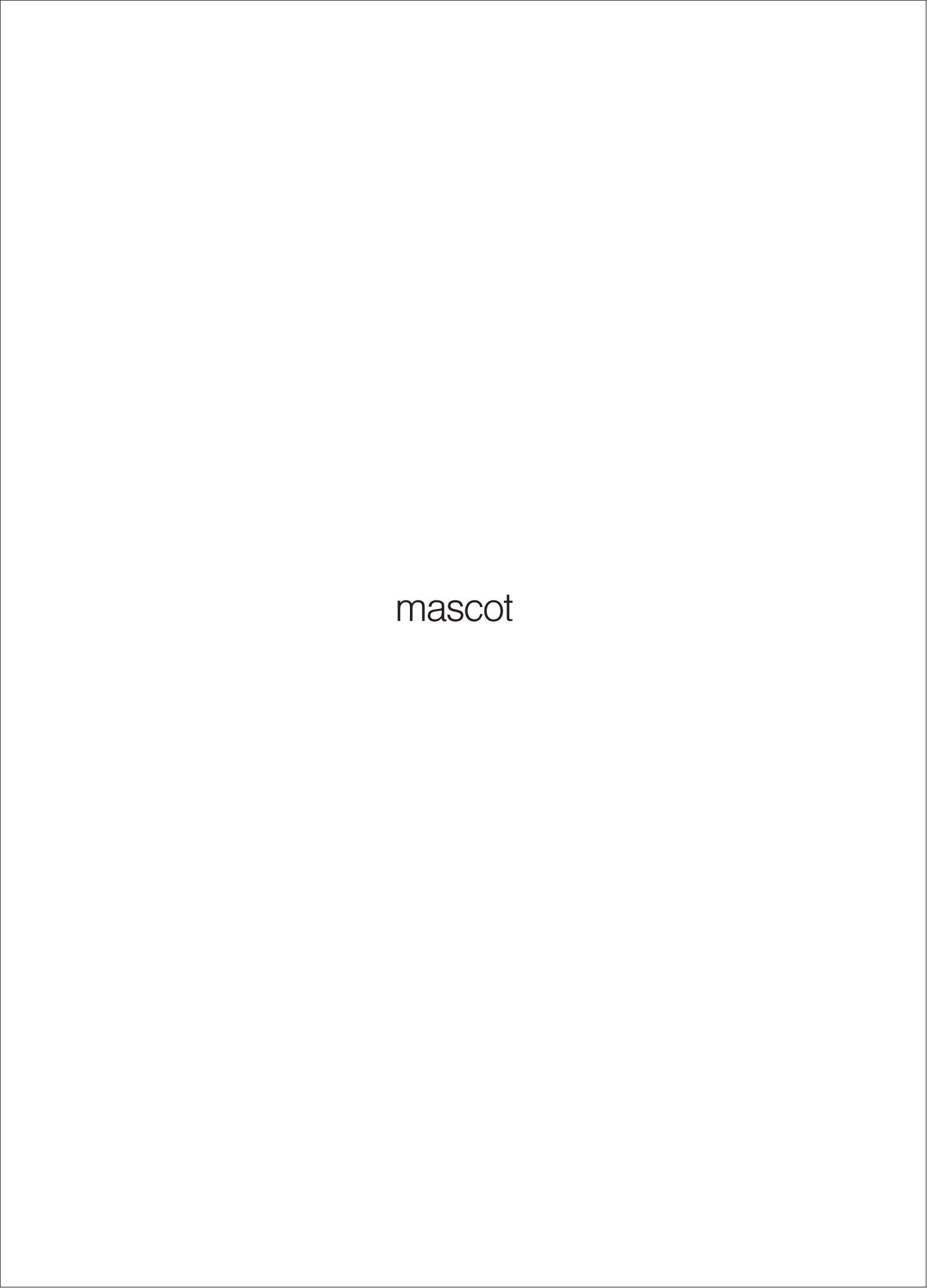
Follow-up coverage emphasized budget cuts at NASA and early warnings about safety. These topics had been covered in the past by the small band of reporters still on the space beat but were ignored on the TV newscasts and, at best, buried inside major newspapers.

In April 2002, the recently retired chairman of NASA’s advisory board told a House subcommittee, “I have never been as concerned for space shuttle safety as I am right now.” The Washington Post reported Monday that a database search showed his testimony was carried by only a few news outlets.

Imagine if such a statement had been uttered during the early days of the space program—when every launch made Page 1 and interrupted regular network TV and radio programming. It would have been a big story. But since then space travel has become ho-hum to the news media and the public.

It’s too bad that the news media—and the rest of us—have such a short attention span. If the spotlight had been put on safety problems in the space program, maybe—just maybe—the Columbia disaster could have been averted.

Janensch is a former newspaper editor who teaches journalism at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn.



Business

Japan's jobless rate at 5.5 percent

By YURI KAGEYAMA
AP BUSINESS WRITER

A drain on retail and restaurant jobs that hit women particularly hard pushed Japan's unemployment rate in December back up to a record 5.5 percent for the third time in a year.

The data Friday from the Labor Force Statistics Office underlined the nation's deep economic troubles, which are eroding jobs even at big companies long used to ensuring lifetime employment for their workers.

Unemployment first hit 5.5 percent in December 2001—the highest since the government began keeping such records in the 1950s—but then improved over the last year.

In October 2002, joblessness again rose to 5.5 percent. The figure dipped to 5.3 percent in November, as stronger exports helped lift the country's economy.

The number of unemployed totaled a seasonally adjusted 3.64 million people in December, up 80,000 from November.

Those who worked in wholesale, retail and restaurants totaled 14.4 million people, down 650,000, or 4.3 percent, from the same month a year ago, marking the second straight month of drops, the government said.



Japanese workers walk past the Shinsei Bank headquarters in Tokyo Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2003.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said the government should do more to help the jobless.

Dow Chemical to cut 3,000 jobs

Dow Chemical Co. plans to cut up to 4,000 jobs, or 8 percent of its work force, and divest up to \$1.5 billion in assets this year to overcome a dismal financial performance in 2002.

The announcement Thursday came after the company reported it lost \$809 million in the fourth quarter and \$338 million for the full year.

The Midland-based company blamed a 35 percent increase in feedstock and

energy costs as well as one-time charges for the quarterly loss which was larger than analysts expected.

"This has been a very disappointing quarter," William S. Stavropoulos, Dow president and chief executive, said in a statement. "It highlights the urgent need for a more disciplined and focused approach to cost control and the continued requirement to increase prices to offset higher feedstock and energy costs."

"We must face up to this tough situation," he told reporters.

The government said Friday that a study in November and December found that about half of the unemployed had no income at all, while others received unemployment compensation and pension payments.

The jobless rate for women in December stood at a record high 5.3 percent, while it was 5.6 percent for men. The jobless rate among Japanese women has been lower than the rate for men for the last four years.

SBA disaster loan aid tops \$50M

U.S. Small Business Administration-Guam branch manager Kenneth Q. Lujan yesterday announced that SBA has approved more than \$50 million in low-interest disaster loans to homeowners, renters, and businesses whose property was damaged by Super Typhoon Pongsona.

Of the \$51,447,500 in disaster loans approved so far, \$42,822,900 has been approved to 1,185 homeowners and renters, and \$8,624,600 has been approved for 224 Guam businesses.

"SBA's disaster assistance employees are committed to helping Guam's residents and business owners rebuild their homes, their businesses and their lives as fast as possible," said Lujan. "SBA will be here as long as it takes to get the job done," he added. "SBA processed these applications in an average of only seven days."

SBA is the federal government's primary source of funds for long-term private sector disaster recovery.

For disaster damage to property owned by individuals,

families and businesses of all sizes that is not fully covered by insurance, the basic form of Federal assistance is a low-interest loan from SBA.

"From the taxpayers' standpoint, providing low interest loans with favorable terms to make them affordable is the least expensive way of helping disaster victims. SBA loans reduce Federal disaster costs when compared to other forms of assistance," said Lujan.

In addition, because of the high risk of substantial future typhoon damage, SBA is offering greater disaster assistance than normal to meet the unique needs on Guam that will avoid future catastrophic losses and protect the property owners from financial ruin.

"When a homeowner or business has more than \$10,000 in uncompensated costs for property damage from Pongsona, SBA will increase the disaster loan amount to fund the full cost of building a typhoon-resistant concrete or similar structure," Lujan continued.

To provide maximum help to individuals and businesses, SBA

representatives are available at SBA's Disaster Center at the Micronesia Mall, 1088 W. Marine Drive, (1st floor, next to Bench) in Dededo. The SBA Disaster Center is open Monday through Saturday from 9am to 6pm. Individuals and business owners may contact SBA's Disaster Center at (671) 633-1190 to speak with an SBA representative.

SBA representatives are also available at the three Disaster Recovery Centers. SBA loan officers will be on hand at all locations to meet with each disaster victim to answer specific questions about how a disaster loan from SBA may help them recover from the disaster damage, issue an application and provide one-on-one assistance in completing their loan application.

The DRCs are located at the Yigo Gymnasium, the University of Guam Field House, and the Inarajan Senior Center (across from the Inarajan Public Health Center (off Rt.2). The DRC's are open Monday through Friday 8am to 6pm. and Saturday from 8am to 5pm.

DAIICHI
DINNER
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Business

Young Style

Life & Style

Life & Style

Widow considers her choices before setting name in stone

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEARABBY: After a long and happy marriage, I became a widow three years ago, and am soon to marry an old family friend, “Vernon.” His wife was a dear friend of mine who was killed several years ago. Vern and I are trying to get our personal business in order ahead of time, so there will be no ill feelings among our adult children.

When I die, I will be buried next to my first husband, and Vern with his late wife. My question is, how should my name appear on the headstone, considering the fact that I plan to become “Mrs. Vernon Jones” when we marry?

My son is upset that I’d give up the “Smith” family name. I don’t want to create friction between my son and my new husband, but I do plan to take Vern’s last name and am surprised at my son’s strenuous objection.

How should this be handled, Abby?
— “MRS. SMITH” IN MARIETTA, GA.

DEAR “MRS. SMITH”: The name on your headstone should probably read “Jane Smith Jones” to avoid confusion. Although it is upsetting to your son that you have chosen to adopt your new husband’s last name, he will have to adapt to reality. One lesson I have learned over the years: You cannot solve every problem—particularly if the problem isn’t yours to begin with.

DEARABBY: For the past eight months, I’ve been involved with a wonderful, kind-hearted man who showers me with affection and says he loves me. I’ll call him Hank.

Hank likes the idea of kids and family and is very family-oriented, as am I. My main concern is he has trouble keeping a job. His pattern has been that he finds a job but only works for a short time, then something always happens, and he either gets fired or laid off.

We had started planning our wedding, but my family doesn’t like him, and that—on top of his job situation—has put a lot of stress on me. I finally told Hank that I won’t marry him until he proves he can support himself and a family.

Is it possible that some men are simply not cut out to work outside the home? Maybe he’s the “Mr. Mom” type. What should I do, Abby?
— BRIDE-TO-BE (OR NOT) IN DAYTON, OHIO

DEAR BRIDE-TO-BE (OR NOT): Yes, some men are better suited to be the “house spouse,” and some women are better suited to life in the business world. However, this does not seem to apply to you. Continue to put this union on hold unless you know you will be content as the primary breadwinner of your family.

DEARABBY: For the past year and a half, I’ve been dating a 41-year-old man named “Gino.” I spend every weekend at his place. My problem is I am still living out of a suitcase. Gino hasn’t offered me a place to keep my things, and I’m tired of taking clothes and personal items back and forth. It feels like I’m homeless.

Gino also won’t answer the phone or check his messages when I’m there. When I mention it, he accuses me of being suspicious and too sensitive. Should I continue with him or pack it in? I should add that we have lots of fun, and he’s told me he loves me.

— TIRED OF LIVING OUT OF A SUITCASE, WEST ORANGE, N.J.

DEAR TIRED: If you want a seven-day relationship or a permanent place in this man’s life, “pack it in.” Gino appears happy with things just as they are, and as much as he loves you on the weekends, he loves his freedom more.



Dear Abby

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

IT'S A PAIR Solution: 6 letters

G L K T H M H T R O P P U S
A N N E T N A D E U C E A H M
S I I O L L E N A O H O I A
L D B D V L T D U I E E P G R
A N O E D R A P N T S A U Y R
U O S U A E L R B E S L R G I
Q P T P B E W I A O P C E S A
E S E C E L N R L P L E R S G
A E A C E A E I A I E T D E E
V R A L R N M L N L N N S O W
D R R Y I B N G C I I L I A R
B O E A S K N O E N B M O O S
V C K K N E E S C E M E I C J
E V O L V G Y T N U O C R S K
R E P E A T E E S P C A M E L

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Aisles, Alike, Antenna, Arcs, Arrange, Balance, Binary, Bolts, Both, Brace, Camel, Card, Chess, Cling, Combine, Connect, Copy, Corresponding, Count, Couple, Dependent, Deuce, Double, Ears, Equals, Even, Eyes, Halves, Join, Knees, Limbs, Lineup, Link, Lock, Love, Marriage, Nuts, Pair, Parallel, Partner, Plug, Poker, Rail, Repeat, Screw, Shoes, Similar, Support, Team, Veep, Wedding.
Yesterday's Answer: Babysitter
To order the new WONDERWORD TREASURY 2: "Memorable Occasions," send check or money order for \$19.95 plus \$3.25 postage and handling (\$14.20 total) to Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderword, 4820 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-225-6734, ext. 6613.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Star Wars" weapon
6 Edge
12 He may stick his neck out
13 Loath
14 Like mosaic tiles
15 Barbara King-solver's output
16 Drudge
17 Garbage boat
19 Asian holiday
20 Info
22 Org.
24 Tummy muscles
27 Genie's home
29 Baba au —
32 Second in command
35 Physical
36 Streetcar
37 Calendar abbr.
38 Prize-fighter
40 Rival rival

DOWN

41 Mr. Wallace song-bird
5 Small
6 Hand (Sp.)
7 Acknowledges
8 Gun the engine
9 Actress Mol
10 Man is one
11 Cozy retreat
12 Lagniappe
18 TV studio equipment
21 Heidi's height
23 California fort
24 "Hail, Caesar!"
25 Beider-becke of jazz
26 Shoulder blades
28 Sacred song-books
30 Popular card game
31 "Punk'd" channel
33 Ostrich's kin
34 Scamp
39 Avarice
41 Put into words
42 Motorist's decision site
43 Legal claim
45 Needs an eraser
47 — smasher (accelerator)
48 Clark's companion
49 Bob of CBS News
51 Mrs. McKinley
53 Scottish river

Solution time: 27 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-14

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:
Molly Ringwald, Meg Tilly, Jimmy Hoffa, Gregory Hines

Happy Birthday: Changes are headed your way. You will have to accept the inevitable in order to move ahead in a positive manner. Focus on what's most important to you and strive to do your best. In hindsight, you will realize that what you were trying so desperately to hold on to was worth letting go of in the end. Your numbers are 7, 12, 21, 23, 30, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
You'll be moving at lightning speed today, trying to get as much done as possible. You should be able to turn your ideas into a moneymaking venture. You will have the competitive edge. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
The more time spent trying to fix problems for others, the better. You will gain respect and receive rewards for your selfless actions. However, don't end up paying for someone else's mistake. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
This could turn out to be a very difficult day for you if you take things the wrong way emotionally. Rushing to finish something will not be the most efficient means of getting things done. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You may be drawn to someone you work with, but regardless of how you feel, avoid becoming intimately involved. If you are determined to succeed, no obstacle will stop you from reaching your goal. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
You can take on anything that comes your way today. Your competitive attitude and entertaining personality will attract new friends and lovers. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
Being critical will lead to arguments. Putting pressure on someone you care about will backfire. Make changes to yourself, not others. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
You will enjoy the company of friends and neighbors today, so plan to do something that will bring you all together. Your hospitality will be appreciated and lead to future opportunities with some of the people you meet. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
Don't take any sort of a risk today. Spend time with someone you love and forgo expensive entertainment. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
You will be undergoing plenty of changes, so let things unfold naturally instead of going against the grain. Be upfront about what you want to do or how you feel. ★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
If you are too open about your plans, your competition will have the upper hand. Keep a low profile, be observant and make sure that you stay in control at all times. ★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Get involved in functions that will help you feel needed. You can meet new friends if you are intent on doing nice things for others. You don't have to spend money to make a difference. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You are likely to face an unsavory situation if you let someone corner you about a personal matter. Getting upset or angry will only make you look guilty. ★★

Birthday Baby: You are likely to follow any path that puts you in a position of authority. You trust in yourself and your ability to make things happen. You strive for success and the glory that it brings.

(Need advice? Check out Eugenia on the Web at www.astroadvice.com or www.eugenialast.com.)

Ziggy®

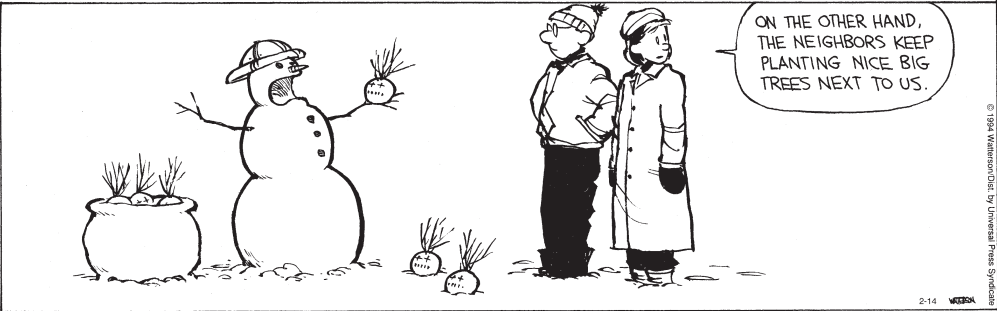
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...NEED A PRICE CHECK ON THIS PENNY CANDY?

2/14

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Watterson



Adam@home

By Brian Basset



Garfield

by Jim Davis



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



Pastimes



MLB Standings					
National League					
East Division					
Team	W	L	Pct	GB	
x-Atlanta	96	55	.636	—	
Montreal	77	76	.503	20	
Philadelphia	75	78	.490	22	
Florida	73	80	.477	24	
New York	72	79	.477	24	
Central Division					
St. Louis	89	63	.586	—	
Houston	81	72	.529	8 1/2	
Cincinnati	75	78	.490	14 1/2	
Pittsburgh	67	86	.438	22 1/2	
Chicago	64	88	.421	25	
Milwaukee	54	98	.355	35	
West Division					
Arizona	94	58	.618	—	
San Francisco	87	65	.572	7	
Los Angeles	85	67	.559	9	
Colorado	69	84	.451	25 1/2	
San Diego	64	89	.418	30 1/2	
American League					
East Division					
New York	95	57	.625	—	
Boston	86	66	.566	9	
Toronto	71	82	.464	24 1/2	
Baltimore	67	85	.441	28	
Tampa Bay	51	101	.336	44	
Central Division					
x-Minnesota	89	63	.586	—	
Chicago	76	77	.497	13 1/2	
Cleveland	68	85	.444	21 1/2	
Kansas City	59	94	.386	30 1/2	
Detroit	54	98	.355	35	
West Division					
Oakland	96	57	.627	—	
Anaheim	95	58	.621	1	
Seattle	88	64	.579	7 1/2	
Texas	69	83	.454	26 1/2	
x-clinched division					

SPORTS BRIEFS

Athletics beat Angels, 5-3



Terrence Long hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the sixth inning as the Oakland Athletics broke a tie for first in the AL West by defeating the Anaheim Angels 5-3 Thursday.

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Saipan Tribune

Sports

Wanted: Triathletes for Rota Blue



This early the Rota Mayor's Office and the KFC Triathlon Club of Japan are already looking for participants to the 9th Annual Rota Blue Triathlon set to take place on November 16 on the peaceful island of Rota.

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